

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

OMB-01 ACDA-10 TRSE-00 /066 W

-----110584 051421Z /44

P R 051215Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4888

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

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USIA FOR IEU

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: MPOL NATO US GW DK

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION TO EVANS-NOVAK COLUMN

REF: (A) COPENHAGEN 4631; (B) COPENHAGEN 4634

1. DANISH MEDIA HAVE SO FAR REACTED TO THE EVANS-NOVAK STORY IN MEASURED TONES.

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MOST PRESS COVERAGE HAS BEEN LIMITED TO WIRE SERVICE REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON FEATURING ADMINISTRATION DENIALS OF THE ACCURACY OF THE EVANS-NOVAK STORY. "BERLINGSKE TIDENDE'S" WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, BENT ALBRECHTSEN, FILES A STORY SUPPLEMENTAL TO HIS CARRIED IN YESTERDAY'S EDITIONS WHICH GIVES A FULLER REPORT OF ADMINISTRATION COMMENTARY TOGETHER WITH

SPECULATION THAT NSC LEAK CAME FROM CONSERVATIVE
US MILITARY SOURCES WHO FEARED DEFENSE SPENDING CUTS.

2. AFTER STORY BROKE HERE YESTERDAY MORNING
(REFTELS), EMBASSY IMMEDIATELY HAND-DELIVERED
YESTERDAY'S (AUGUST 3) WIRELESS FILE ACCOUNT OF
POWELL STATEMENTS, BROWN TESTIMONY IN SENATE
COMMITTEE AS WELL AS SCHECHTER STATEMENT TO DANISH
RADIO AND TV, ALL COPENHAGEN DAILIES AND BY
TELEPHONE TO DENMARK'S BIGGEST PROVINCIAL PAPER,
"JYLLANDS-POSTEN" (INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE).

3. YESTERDAY EVENING'S TV NEWS CARRIED FACTUAL
REPORT OF STORY ITSELF AND DENIALS AND FEATURED
BRIEF INTERVIEW WITH CHIEF OF DANISH DEFENSE STAFF,
G.K.KRISTENSEN. KRISTENSEN TURNED ASIDE INTER-
VIEWERS' QUESTIONS WITH FLAT STATEMENT THAT DANISH
DEFENSE SIMPLY DID NOT GIVE CREDIT TO ANY REPORTS
THAT THE USG WAS PREPARED TO REVERSE THE FORWARD
DEFENSE STRATEGY SO CAREFULLY WORKED OUT IN NATO.

4. IN THE INTERVIEW AND ON DANISH TV, GENERAL
G.K.KRISTENSEN ADDED THAT THE REPORTED CHANGE OF
STRATEGY IS UNREALISTIC AND THAT NO IMPORTANCE
SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO A NEWSPAPER STORY. HE
FOUND IT UNFORTUNATE, HOWEVER, THAT THE STORY HAD
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BEEN PUBLISHED BECAUSE IT COULD WEAKEN THE CREDIBILITY
OF NATO AND THEREBY LEAD TO MISCALCULATIONS
ON THE PART OF A POTENTIAL ENEMY WHO MIGHT BE
TEMPTED TO START AN ATTACK.

5. DANISH TV ALSO CARRIED SEVERAL DENIALS OF THE EVANS-
NOVAK STORY, INCLUDING A REPORT FROM ITS US CORRESPONDENT,
QUOTING THE WHITE HOUSE AS ASSURING THAT
THE PRESENT STRATEGY OF FORWARD DEFENSE IS UNCHANGED.
TV ALSO QUOTED TASS AS SAYING THAT THE REPORTED
STRATEGY AMOUNTED TO AN OFFER OF ONE-THIRD OF WEST
GERMANY BUT THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NOT ACCEPT
THIS OFFER. A TV REVIEWER COMMENTED THAT TASS HAD
HAD "A SMALL GIGGLE" OVER THE COMMOTION.

6. ALL OF TODAY'S NEWSPAPER STORIES WERE CARRIED
ON INSIDE FOREIGN AFFAIRS PAGES. "BERLINGSKE TIDENDE"
HEADLINED DISPATCH FROM ALBRECHTSEN IN WASHINGTON,
"USA REASSURES BONN AFTER STRATEGIC SHOCK." STORY
WAS STRAIGHT REPORTING OF WASHINGTON DENIALS,
NOTING THAT COUNSELOR BRZEZINSKI HAD TELEPHONED FOREIGN
MINISTER GENSCHER TO REITERATE US COMMITMENT TO STRATEGY

OF FORWARD DEFENSE. BRZEZINSKI-GENSCHER CONVERSATION
WAS ALSO REPORT IN MOST OTHER ACCOUNTS.

7. "AKTUELT" (SOC DEM), "INFORMATION" (INTELLECTUAL
LEFTIS), AND "JYLLANDS"POSTEN" ALL RAN STORIES
BASED ON WIRELESS FILE MATERIAL. "AKTUELT HEADLINED
"USA WILL NOT ACCEPT SOVIET OCCUPATION OF NATO AREAS."
"INFORMATION'S" LEAD WAS "CONFLICT OVER WHETHER NATO
WILL ABANDON LARGE GERMAN AREAS." "JYLLANDS-POSTEN'S"
SMALL FRONT-PAGE LEAD-IN TO INSIDE PAGE INTERVIEW WITH
DANISH CHIEF OF THE DEFENSE STAFF KRISTENSEN WAS HEADLINED
"COMMOTION OVER NATO STRATEGY." INTERVIEW HEADLINE
WAS "NATO BORDERS WILL BE DEFENDED WITH MORE THAN WORDS."

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8. THE TWO EDITORIAL COMMENTS EMPHASIZED CONFIDENCE
IN THE US DENIALS. "BERLINGSKE TIDENDE" QUOTE A
DENIAL WAS NOT NECESSARY TO PROVE THAT THE QUOTED

DOCUMENT COULD NOT INCLUDE INSTRUCTIONS FOR A NEW
AMERICAN NATO STRATEGY. THE AREA IN QUESTION IS NOT TO
BE DEFENDED PRIMARILY BY AMERICAN FORCES
WHICH ARE MAINLY CONCENTRATED IN THE SOUTHERN PART
OF WEST GERMANY ... IT IS SELF-EVIDENT THAT DECISIONS
CONCERNING WHICH AREAS SHOULD BE DEFENDED
ARE NOT MADE IN THE WHITE HOUSE ALONE ... THERE
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ARE, THEREFORE, GOOD REASONS FOR ACCEPTING THE
IMMEDIATE AMERICAN DENIALS. NATO'S FORWARD DEFENSE
STRATEGY, WHICH OF COUSE IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE
DEFENSE OF DENMARK ALSO, HAS NOT BEEN CHANGED BY
THE U.S. UNQUOTE. BUT, THE PAPER CONCLUDED,
CONSIDERING THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN CARRYING
OUT THE RESOLVE TO INCREASE NATO DEFENSE
EXPENDITURES BY THREE PERCENT, "EVEN INCORRECT OR
INCOMPLETE REPORTS ON CHANGE IN NATO STRATEGY CAN
CAUSE NERVOUS SPASMS IN THE ALLIANCE."

9. "JYLLANDS-POSTEN" QUOTE OFFICEAL AMERICAN
SPOKESMEN HAVE DURING THE PAST 24 HOURS DENIED
CLAIMS THAT WASHINGTON SHOULD BE READY TO SACRIFICE
PARTS OF WES GERMAY IN A FUTURE CONFLICT.
THERE IS HARDLY ANY REASON TO DOUBT THESE DENIALS.

10. A PAPER ON DIFFERENT TACTICAL RETREATS MAY
CERTAINLY EXIST EOMEWHERE IN THE NATIONAL SECURITY
COUNCIL, HENRY KISSENGER'S FORMER WORKING PLACE.
BUT FOR SEVERAL REASONS, IT IS MORE THAN DOUBTFUL
THAT SUCH A PAPER WOULD BE THE BASIS FOR A CHANGE
OF US SECURITY POLICY IN EUROPE.

11. FIRST OF ALL, THE PRESENT SECURITY ADVISOR
ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI'S CONCEPT OF THE WORLD IS
BASED ON A STRONG EUROPE. SECONDLY, IT WOULD ALSO
BE IMPOSSIBLE IN THE LONG RUN TO KEEP SUCH A PLAN
SECRET FROM THE ALLIES, AND IT WOULD RUN COMPLETELY
COUNTER TO AMERICAN EFFORTS TO RESTORE THE RELATIONSHIP
OF TRUST WITH THE ALLIES OF THE US - A RELATIONSHIP
WHICH WAS BADLY SHAKEN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.
FINALLY, THE TWO JOURNALISTS, NOVAK AND EVANS, WHO
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PUBLISHED THE CLAIMS, HAVE THE REPUTATION OF LAUNCHING
TRIAL BALLOONS ... IN ANY CASE, THERE IS NO

REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE AREAS IN QUESTION, INCLUDING
THE ONE SOUTH OF DENMARK'S BORDER, SHOULD BE
UNIMPORTANT FOR NATO UNQUOTE.

12. THE ONLY PAPER TODAY THAT APPEARED TO GIVE SOME
CREDENCE TO THE EVANS-NOVAK STORY WAS THE SMALL
COPENHAGEN-DAILY "KRISTELIGT DAGBLAD (CHURCH ORIENTED).
WHILE REPEATING BOTH THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ORIGINAL
STORY AND OFFICIALS' DENIALS, THE PAPER ALSO QUOTED
"SENIOR OFFICERS IN NATO'S NORTHERN REGION" FOR
CONFIRMATION THAT THE WESER RIVER LINE "IS THE
DEFENSE LINE FOR NATO IN EUROPE." THE PAPER'S
SOURCE CONTINUED, "IT IS TRUE THAT WEST GERMANY
WILL LOSE ALMOST ONE-THIRD OF HER LAND AREA AND A
SUBSTANTIAL PART OF HER INDUSTRY. THIS LOSS, HOWEVER,
SHOULD BE REDRESSED BY THE NATO FLEXIBLE RESPONSE."
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